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# Learning Analytics Research Group

## Invitation to submit learning analytics research project proposals

### Background

Jisc's Learning Analytics Service went live in August 2018 and is being rolled out to institutions across the UK. Jisc is now looking at ways to enhance the Service and to further develop the field of learning analytics collaboratively across higher and further education. We are seeking partners to co-design research aimed at building the evidence base for learning analytics and we will support a number of projects which are likely to have direct benefits for students and their institutions.

### Proposals

- The research to be undertaken should advance the field of research into learning analytics
- It should be focussed primarily on practical interventions and ways in which learning analytics can be deployed to support learning and teaching and improve the student experience
- Proposals must be based around areas of learning analytics which can be used to enhance the Jisc Learning Analytics service and develop its effectiveness and utility for UK higher and further education institutions

Potential areas for research include (but are not restricted to):

#### 1. Learning analytics for curriculum enhancement

Most learning analytics projects to date have focused on improving student success, however the rich data sources increasingly available can also be used to gain insight into the effectiveness of the curriculum. This is a relatively unexploited area with potentially significant impacts on our understanding of how to create engaging and effective curricula. Research proposals are not limited to but may include the development and evaluation of methodologies and tools for creating curricula, which simultaneously capture usage data that can be used to help to assess the effectiveness of the learning activities and content.

#### 2. Learning analytics to support student welfare and mental health

Universities are experiencing greater uptake of welfare services and looking for ways to deal with the increasing prevalence of mental health issues among students. Research proposals are not limited to but may include: prototyping and user evaluation of apps designed to help students self-manage their mental health; the analysis of data and which data sources may be useful to identify mental health issues; the development and trialling of policies and process for taking interventions as well as guidelines aimed at those developing analytics services and products to support this area; literature reviews relating to approaches that have been proposed leading on to mini-proofs of concept to test these ideas.

#### 3. Student-facing learning analytics

Jisc's *Study Goal* is an example of an app which provides analytics on their learning to students. Research proposals are

not limited to but might include specification, rollout and evaluation of new functionality and interfaces designed to assist students in various aspects of their studies. Important issues to consider as part of this work may include: examining the relative impacts on student success and engagement resulting from deployments of staff dashboards and student apps; how we can quantify and show student interactions (not just with the curriculum but with one another) to gain / give insights about their learning trajectories; how personalisation affects a learning analytics student facing solution.

#### 4. Studies showing evidence of the impact of learning analytics initiatives

While evidence is beginning to accumulate about the effectiveness of learning analytics systems and processes, there is a need for much more in order to convince stakeholders of its worth and to justify ongoing investment by institutions. Research proposals in this area may include analysis of the effectiveness of learning analytics projects at particular institutions, perhaps using usage data for learning analytics tools; interviews and surveys of stakeholders; and studies aimed at identifying correlations between interventions and improvements in measures of student success. For projects in this area the Jisc will work with you to capture results on a common template so system-wide impact and evidence can be more easily compared and shared more widely.

## Timeline

- 21<sup>st</sup> Dec 2018 Proposals should be sent by email to [niall.sclater@jisc.ac.uk](mailto:niall.sclater@jisc.ac.uk)
- Early Jan 2019 Notification of projects to be supported
- 24<sup>th</sup> Jan 2019 Supported projects will be expected to present and develop proposals further with input from the community at the next Jisc Learning Analytics Research Group meeting, Keele University

## Proposal structure

Proposals should be no longer than 5 pages and include:

- Description of the project with aims and objectives
- The approach and research methodology
- Description of the deliverables
- Timeline and major project milestones
- Amount of support requested, including breakdown of project costs
- Risk analysis
- Contact name, institution, telephone, and email details of project members (please indicate project lead)

## Deliverables

We are looking for projects to deliver:

- A project summary reviewing the project and describing any outcomes and research findings, with suggestions for further developing the research
- Examples of how the research can be applied to developing the Learning Analytics Service and its functionality, considering cross-system or national solutions as well as institutional solutions
- One or more brief case studies for information and promotional purposes (Jisc can assist with editing and designing these)
- Presentation of project findings at a Learning Analytics Research Group meeting and one other Jisc event if required.

## Budget

Support from Jisc should be primarily for staff time, potentially buying out existing staff in the institution to work on the project. Between £10,000 and £20,000 of support per project is envisaged.

## Evaluation of proposals

Projects will be evaluated according to:

- Relevance to the UK higher / further education sector and potential to boost the value to the community of the Jisc learning analytics service, and learning analytics in general
- Benefits for learning, teaching and/or student support
- Value for money, including any contribution in kind the institution is making to the work
- Quality of the proposed project plan and methodology